FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Food security remains stable despite slightly lower than the normal Jibraka harvests

Jibraka harvests in the SPLM-N controlled area of South Kordofan have ended and farmers are now concentrating on far farms. In Blue Nile, harvesting in far farms will start in December and extend until February 2020. According to the November Secretariat of Agriculture (SoA) pre-harvest assessment report, poor harvests were experienced in Thobo, Western Kadugli and Delami Counties of South Kordofan as a result of heavy rain and floods. In addition to floods, pests and diseases were the causes of lower near farm harvests in Yabus and Komo Ganza Payams of Blue Nile region. As a result, households are dependent on fish from stagnant water of the October floods that became breeding grounds for fish. Fish is for both consumption and additional cash income. At the time of reporting, part of the remaining food relief from Maban to vulnerable communities in Wadaka had not yet been delivered due to logistical challenges related to recent flooding.

As the dry season begins, communities mainly in Wadaka and Yabus Payams have resorted to gold mining in exchange for food and other products.

Markets resumed to full operation after the rainy season, but with high influx of returnees, prices of basic food commodities in Delami and Western Kadugli Counties have increased. For example, the price for sorghum as the main staple food is currently between 40 and 60 SDG compared to same time last year when the price of sorghum was between 40 and 60 SDG.

According to the latest FSMU quarterly report, “Despite a slightly below normal harvest, moderate and severe hunger decreased in every monitoring area compared to the same season in October 2018. This was reflected in the total population suffering from severe hunger, which reduced from 52,420 in July 2019 to 15,562 in October 2019”.

Highlights:

Heavy rainfall in the Two Areas affected crop production

Increased migration: inadequate drug supply to meet increased need
Market prices are beginning to drop in many markets across the region, with the spike in bean prices witnessed in the Western Jebel area returning closer to normal. As household food stocks begin to increase from both the near and far farm harvests, household dependence on markets is expected to decrease, meaning that levels of food security will be less sensitive to market price in the next quarter. Sorghum prices are at a historic low in many parts of the monitored areas. This suggests that the inflation and high staple food item prices observed in other parts of the country do not have an effect on the monitored areas, even in counties that use the Sudanese Pound as their local currency.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Increased movement: Inadequate basic drug supply

Cases of malaria and acute watery diarrhea have been reported as the most prevailing diseases in South Kordofan; 14 under-five deaths from malaria, pneumonia and jaundice were reported in Western Jebels. In Blue Nile, 66 cases of malaria were reported in Amora hills, Northern Kurumuk, Geissan County. Other diseases with high cases in Blue Nile included; ear and eye infections mostly in infants, and 15 cases of pneumonia. Gidel Mother of Mercy Hospital in Hieban County has registered 172 patients from government-controlled areas, of which 13 per cent were women. As a result, the facility has run out of malaria drugs to meet the increasing demand (reasons for their coming is to receive free and better medical care compared to availability of services in Sudan, where services are costly). The Coordination Unit in collaboration with the Secretariat of Health (SoH) will keep track of migration statistics.

In Blue Nile, health care improved across the four Payams of Komo Ganza, Yabus, Chali and Wadaka due to drug supply by P1 and P8 to 23 PHCUs and 5 PHCUs respectively. However, there was no drug supply in the areas of Aqontayo and Benamo in Yabus Payam.
ANIMAL HEALTH

Urgent need for vaccination

The local Secretariat of Animal Health has run out of livestock drugs. The available drugs in crossline markets are too costly for households. Livestock vaccination is required at the end of the rainy season to control disease outbreak. The SoAH through implementing partners is appealing for drug supply and training of more Community Animal Health Workers. In Western Jebels, water points for livestock are lacking as well as good pastures.

There is fear of the spread of tse tse flies along Khor Yabus valley in Blue Nile, because of Fulani/Falatta nomads who returned in the region with their livestock believed to be carriers of tse tse flies. Outbreak of chicken disease (Samir) was reported in November.

WASH

Unsafe water for households

There are 48 broken handpumps in Thobo County that need immediate repair. Access to safer drinking water remains a significant challenge in both Areas and communities continue to depend on unsafe water which makes them prone to water-borne diseases.

EDUCATION

Education in Blue Nile still a challenge

Schools in South Kordofan reopened for 2019/2020 academic year. A total of 2,415 candidates sat for the South Sudan Primary Leaving Examinations. In Blue Nile, Primary Leaving Examinations for 2018/2019 were not held due to lack of paper. Communities struggle to keep schools functioning. A workshop on Education under the theme, “Empowering Education in Blue Nile Through Community Participation”. Lack of scholastic materials, the fact that more than 50 per cent of teachers are untrained, and parents’ inability to pay school fees remain challenges to education services.

SECURITY, ACCESS AND PROTECTION

High migration into the Two Areas.

High influx of returnees is expected after UNHCR stopped food rations in Yida refugee camp in September. Also, as more migrations are expected when peace returns to the Two Areas, authorities are expected to appeal to actors for support in terms of WASH, food, NFIs and medical care.

People seeking medical care from government-controlled areas have put pressure on the already constrained supply of drugs in the Two Areas.

There are reports of destroyed homes, burnt or washed away by floods, hence need for NFIs to support households whose houses were destroyed.

The SKBN CU reports security incidents according to the information received from a variety of sources. This information does not include a comprehensive verification of perpetrators or damages.
This monthly update on humanitarian issues in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states is compiled by the SKBN Coordination Unit. With three main functions of information, coordination and advocacy, the SKBNCU strives to put out regular and accurate information on the humanitarian situation of people affected by the conflict since 2011. Please send your comments to advocacy@skbnCU.org